Behold! A Molehill

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The final report of the Dies Committee on the War Relocation Authority fell pathetically short of its advance publicity. For weeks, the subcommittee which conducted the investigation under the chairmanship of Representative Costello of California gave out intimations of spectacular disclosures. We shuddered in expectation of having a hideous black dragon revealed to us in all its ferocity. And lo, the sequel to all this fanfare is a mere pipsqueak. The worst that Mr. Costello has uncovered is that the WRA released from its relocation centers 23 members of an organization called the Butoku-Kai —which turns out to be nothing more frightening than a fencing society.

And now, to cap our disappointment, comes a minority report from the third member of the Costello subcommittee, Representative Eberharter of Pennsylvania. "After careful consideration," he declares, "I cannot avoid the conclusion that the report of the majority is prejudiced, and that most of its statements are not proven." Mr. Eberharter's report is worth reading in full. It affords a clear, impartial appraisal of the task confronting WRA and of the way in which that task has been met. The conclusion to which this minority investigator came was that "the War Relocation Authority has acted, by and large, efficiently and capably, and has carried out the spirit and intent of the President's executive order under which it was established."

The subcommittee majority emerged from its long researches with three recommendations: (1) that the WRA accelerate its segregation program; (2) that a new board be set up to investigate evacuees who apply for release from the relocation centers; and (3) that the WRA "inaugurate a thoroughgoing program of Americanization for those Japanese who remain in the centers." As Representative Eberharter has sensibly pointed out, the first of these recommendations has already been undertaken and the second would merely establish a wholly unnecessary superboard to do what the WRA is already doing with great care. As for the third recommendation, it is going to be somewhat difficult to Americanize American citizens who have been deprived of their fundamental citizenship rights.